



ICARD TOWNSHIP WATER CORPORATION

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE: MONDAY MAY 11, 2020

AS NORTH CAROLINA PREPARES TO HEAD INTO THE FIRST FULL WEEK OF PHASE 1, THE THREE-PHASE PLAN TO LIFT RESTRICTIONS DUE TO THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19), HERE ARE A FEW REMINDERS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR BUSINESSES PREPARING TO REOPEN.

With the [Governor's Stay at Home Order and Executive Order No. 120](#) requiring several businesses to close for several weeks, business and building owners are encouraged to take steps to prepare their pipes for increased water use as they reopen according to the Governor's [three-phase approach to lifting restrictions](#) due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

If water is not being used for a longer period of time, the water held in a building's pipes can become stagnant. Disinfectants in the water, such as chlorine, will likely dissipate or become undetectable.

"These kinds of conditions increase the chance that waterborne bacteria has grown and spread in the water sitting in the pipes," Public Utilities Director John Nichols said. "Business owners and employees can easily remedy this through simple but necessary actions to ensure the water in the building has recently been treated with disinfectants and is taste- or odor-free before resuming their normal water use."

The best immediate action is to flush the entire building, including all water-using appliances such as ice machines and dishwashers. Flushing clears out the low-quality water that accumulates during low use and replaces it with higher quality water from the main water supply. The fresh water will also help mitigate other problems (e.g., loss of protective scale and biofilm growth) that might have emerged while the water was stagnant.

If staff are available to flush your buildings' water lines, you are encouraged to start now. Run enough water through all outlets (e.g., hoses, faucets, shower heads, toilets, etc.) and remove aerators when possible. Typical protocols require running water for 10 to 30 minutes for each outlet (duration varies based on outlet velocity). In most cases, flushing with water that has normal amounts of chlorine (the chlorine already in the water supply) is sufficient for cleaning the water system.

The scientists and engineers at the Environmental Science, Policy and Research Institute (ESPRI) and AH Environmental Consultants, Inc. (AH) developed a [brief guidance material to help those who are responsible for maintaining building water systems](#).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also has detailed information on reactivating plumbing systems after dormant conditions at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html>